Clause 12 in Report No. 10 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on May 21, 2015.

12
2014 YorkInfo Partnership Annual Report

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated May 14, 2015 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services:

1. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

The Regional Clerk forwards this report to the local municipalities, school boards and conservation authorities for information.

2. Purpose

To inform Committee about the 2014 achievements and 2015 goals of the YorkInfo Partnership that plays an important support role in the delivery of the Partners' program and service delivery.

3. Background

The YorkInfo Partnership is a GIS collaboration partnership amongst the nine local municipalities, two school boards, two conservation authorities and the Region

Since 1996, the nine local municipalities, the school boards, the conservation authorities and the Region have worked together as the YorkInfo Partnership to maximize their collective investment in Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

The culture and focus of the Partnership is collaboration. It pools resources to purchase commercial data, such as orthophotography and Teranet property and ownership information. Data collected by each organization through its business

processes is shared with other partners who can benefit. It shares knowledge and expertise on data management, technology development, and gaining insight through analytics. Members can choose to participate in any project that is of interest and value to their organization.

The Partnership provides trusted sources of data for some key program and service delivery

Having one source of trusted information means data is collected once by the business responsible for creating and maintaining it, and is shared with other partners. Examples include water and wastewater infrastructure for shared service delivery. This approach reduces duplication and generates confidence the data being used is the best available.

The Partnership works together to develop and execute an annual work plan

The annual work plan is developed by the Partnership's Executive Board (Chief Information Officers, Directors, Managers from each organization), and Coordinating Committee members (management and staff from each organization), who provide both a strategic and operational perspective to the work plan. They identify key projects the Partnership can support or lead over the next three to four years. The delivery of the work plan is coordinated through the Coordinating Committee and is completed by project teams and working groups.

4. Analysis and Options

The 2014 work plan was comprised of eight main projects

In 2014, the Partnership delivered on the following eight projects that support the provision of responsive and efficient public service:

1. Common All-Pipes database
2. Standards for submission of digital planning and engineering drawings
3. Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) data and service improvement recommendations
4. Common parks data model and database
5. Joint acquisition of Teranet property and ownership data
6. Joint acquisition of aerial imagery
7. 24/7 self-service of most current data
8. GIS training and technical knowledge sharing sessions

These projects related to the creation and acquisition of common data, making data easily accessible, and building GIS knowledge and capacity within all organizations.

All-Pipes database provides common understanding and insight, and supports water and wastewater delivery across the region

The water/wastewater portfolio is a shared responsibility between the Region and local municipalities. All-Pipes is a standardized GIS database the local municipalities and the Region have created, maintain, share and use to provide a common picture and understanding of the water and wastewater infrastructure. There are multiple benefits of the availability of this information. It supports emergency management planning and response, helps engineers model the flow of water, supports wellhead protection planning, and helps define ownership and accountability for the components of the system. A shared mobile app allows staff to view this data in the field.

Development of standards and processes for submission of digital planning and engineering drawings will ease submission process

Land use planning and engineering projects are submitted using drawing software that includes the data needed by municipalities, but not in a consistent format. It takes significant effort to transform the data into a format that can be used by staff and systems. To date, Vaughan and the Region have drafted a five-step process that will facilitate the seamless delivery of drawings over the next two to five years. The first step involves the creation of tools to transform the drawing into a series of products, and to extract only the required data. The Township of King has volunteered to pilot the automated submission process. The tools and process will then be made available to interested municipalities.

Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) data and service issues and recommendations communicated to MPAC

Finance and GIS staff held a workshop to identify the common issues experienced with Municipal Property Assessment Corporation's (MPAC) data and services. The group developed a list of recommendations to help address these concerns. The recommendations were communicated to MPAC staff at a meeting in November. MPAC responded it was aware of many of these items and was working with the Province to conduct a Property Assessment Review which would address many of the concerns and recommendations.

YorkInfo Partnership representatives will continue to participate in forums and symposiums to provide input and monitor MPAC's improvement initiatives to

advocate for access to the quality assessment information needed by the local municipalities and the Region.

Common parks data standard supports many business needs

A common parks standard was jointly developed to support multiple needs such as, mapping of green space, public safety and emergency response, and asset management. All local municipalities adopted all or part of the standard and are implementing on timelines according to resources availability. Once the base data is complete the model can be extended to meet specific business needs of each organization.

Joint acquisition of Teranet property and ownership data reduces individual costs

Teranet is the authoritative source of property and ownership information in Ontario. This information is needed by municipal governments to support environmental assessments, expropriations, provide notification for service disruptions and public consultations. The Region entered into an expanded agreement with Teranet that allows local municipalities to sublicense the data at a reduced cost. Aurora, Georgina, King, Newmarket, Vaughan and Whitchurch-Stouffville have elected to participate in this opportunity. Other interested municipalities can participate at any time within the same pricing structure.

Aerial imagery accurately shows what existed on the ground at specific points in time

Up-to-date aerial imagery shows what existed at specific points in time, documents an area's growth, supports operational decisions and is integrated directly into many applications. By sharing in the cost of acquiring annual orthophotography, it costs each agency approximately 50% less than it would by procuring it individually.

In addition to the annual orthophotography program, the Region purchased Region-wide coverage of aerial imagery for 1970 and 1988 and made it available to partners interested in sharing in the cost of digitally processing the film photography. The 1970 aerial imagery is particularly interesting and valuable as it shows the physical composition of the Region the year before its inception. This allows the tracing of the geographic history of the Region from its beginning. 1971 is also a "grandfathering" year for many local municipalities and having this vintage of aerial imagery can help determine the status of exemption rights for properties.

Self-service data delivery application lets partners pull up-to-date data 24/7

Prior to 2014, over 90 datasets, including roads, parcels, and addresses, were delivered to partners on a quarterly basis through a manual process. This resulted in data being less current than what is available on YorkMaps, the Region's web mapping site. But now, using a web-based application called "Clip, Zip and Ship", partner organizations can download these datasets directly from the Region's data warehouse whenever they need it. This ensures they have access to the most current and best information available. The next phase will enable interested partners to share access to approved data amongst each other.

Technical user groups and GIS training strengthen GIS use as a key business tool

Technical workshops and user groups share and advance knowledge and experience among GIS professionals. GIS applications, such as web mapping, can be built more quickly and result in a more consistent user experience for the public and staff. Sharing knowledge and experience on complex software migrations reduces the need for engaging consultants.

York Region's GIS training program is available to all organizations' users at no cost and helps smaller municipalities to build GIS capacity internally. Over the past two years, 57 external non-GIS staff have participated acknowledging GIS is a key business tool for decision-making and effective communications. The training helps build GIS capacity within organizations at no charge, avoiding approximately $50,000 in training costs over the past two years.

2015 priorities will build on work initiated in 2014, collaborating on acquiring additional data, and developing technology solutions needed for business support

The YorkInfo Partnership's governance committees meet annually to identify and prioritize projects to be undertaken by and/or with support of the Partnership over the next three to four years. Much of what is planned for 2015 is the completion, or next phase of the eight projects initiated in 2014.

In addition, Partners will collaborate on enabling mobile and *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) compliant web mapping, enhancing access to shared data, acquiring 2015 orthophotography, searching for additional historical imagery, exploring interest in developing a common trail data model, and investigating the value of laser technology for collecting terrain and building data.

Link to key Council-approved plans

The YorkInfo Partnership supports the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan in the Strategic Priority Area of "Provide Responsive and Efficient Public Service". Data is a key strategic resource. The Partnership enables access to a common source of trusted data to Regional staff and staff in other organizations in support of efficient program and service delivery.

5. Financial Implications

Pooling resources enables partner organizations to acquire datasets, develop solutions and build GIS capacity at the best value to residents

Partner organizations share the cost of acquiring several large, expensive but essential datasets, such as orthophotography and Teranet ownership information. Co-operative purchasing also reduces the costs associated with the administration of the contracts. A consistent costing model allocates the costs based on the dataset.

Interested organizations share application best practices, platforms and code on webmapping, and data sharing applications thus reducing duplication of effort and investments in technology.

The joint acquisition of orthophotography saved each municipality on average 45%, for a total of $216,450 over the five year contract term.

As well, the GIS training program builds GIS capacity within organizations at no charge, saving approximately $50,000 in training costs over the past two years.

6. Local Municipal Impact

All nine local municipalities are members of the YorkInfo Partnership. They and the Region have the responsibility to deliver services that fully employ the best use of data sharing and technology for the best value to residents.

7. Conclusion

The YorkInfo Partnership focus on collaboration has proven its value in many areas: development and acquisition of common, trusted data; enabling access to information collected by each organization through its business processes; development of technology solutions that enable easy access to the data; and

the building of GIS capacity within organizations no matter its size or current investment in GIS technology. Members can participate in any project that is of interest and value to their organizations.

The Partnership made significant accomplishments in 2014 in all these areas and is positioned to continue to build on these investments in 2015.

For more information on this report, please contact John Houweling, Director of Geographic Information Services at ext. 71529.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

May 14, 2015

6076181

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request